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*courage is contagious*

## Viewing cable 09QUITO145, FOREIGN MINISTER ON REBUILDING BILATERAL RELATIONS

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### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09QUITO145**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">09QUITO145</a>	<a href="#">2009-02-27 17:35</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">SECRET//NOFORN</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Quito</a>

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.eluniverso.com/2011/04/07/1/1355/cable-194442.html>

VZCZCXYZ0002  
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHQT #0145/01 0581735  
ZNY SSSSS ZZH  
O 271735Z FEB 09  
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0094  
INFO RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE 7984  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE 3407  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ FEB 1430  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA IMMEDIATE 3051  
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL IMMEDIATE 4124  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHEFHLC/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2266  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T QUITO 000145

NOFORN  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/27/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [EFIN](#) [EC](#)

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER ON REBUILDING BILATERAL RELATIONS  
AND LAW ENFORCEMENT COOPERATION, WITH AN IDB SIDE NOTE

REF: A. STATE 17841

...

id: 194442

date: 2/27/2009 17:35

refid: 09QUITO145

origin: Embassy Quito

classification: SECRET//NOFORN

destination: 09QUITO103|09QUITO113|09QUITO126|09STATE14726|09STATE17841

header:

VZCZCXYZ0002

OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHQT #0145/01 0581735

ZNY SSSSS ZZH

O 271735Z FEB 09

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0094

INFO RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE 7984

RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE 3407

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RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL IMMEDIATE 4124

RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RHEFHL/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

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RHMFSS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2266

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

----- header ends -----

S E C R E T QUITO 000145

NOFORN

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/27/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [EFIN](#) [EC](#)

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER ON REBUILDING BILATERAL RELATIONS  
AND LAW ENFORCEMENT COOPERATION, WITH AN IDB SIDE NOTE

REF: A. STATE 17841

[1](#)B. BOWEN-HODGES E-MAIL 2/25/09

[1](#)C. STATE 14726

[1](#)D. QUITO 126

[1](#)E. QUITO 113

[1](#)F. QUITO 103

Classified By: Classified by Ambassador Heather Hodges. Reason: 1.4 b  
and d.

[1](#)1. (S/NF) Summary. Foreign Minister Falconi told the Ambassador on February 26 that Ecuador wanted to move beyond the difficulties created by expelling two U.S. diplomats and continue counternarcotics cooperation. He said that the GOE is developing ideas on how the two countries can continue to work through vetted law enforcement units. The Ambassador formally protested President Correa's public announcement that one of the expelled diplomats was the CIA station chief. She expressed willingness to explore how we can continue to support special law enforcement units, but stressed that there are certain necessary conditions. Falconi briefly touched on Ecuador's hope for G-7 support for several pending loans from the InterAmerican Development Bank, to which the Ambassador did not reply. End summary.

¶2. (C) The Ambassador was invited to meet with Foreign Minister Fander Falconi on February 26. The initial reason for the meeting was that Falconi was having a series of individual meetings with G-7 Ambassadors to discuss financing from the InterAmerican Development Bank (IDB) (reftel a). However, the morning of the meeting the Foreign Ministry informed the Embassy that bilateral issues would also be discussed in the meeting. Falconi invited U/S for Bilateral Affairs Jorge Orbe to join. EconCouns attended as note-taker.

#### Bilateral Relations

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¶3. (C) Falconi, who spoke in a measured, almost somber tone throughout the meeting, opened by saying that the past 2-3 weeks had been difficult and that fissures had opened in the bilateral relationship, an implicit reference to the expulsion of two U.S. diplomats (reftel d-f) and President Correa's public statement on February 21 that the second of the expelled officers was the CIA station chief. Falconi said that the Government of Ecuador wanted to overcome these issues and move the relationship forward. He said that the government had several proposals that it would like the United States to analyze. But before moving on, Falconi asked the Ambassador whether she wished to say anything.

#### Formal U.S. Protest

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¶4. (S/NF) The Ambassador responded that recent developments had been difficult and surprising, and just when we had thought the problems were behind us, there were more surprises. She continued that she had instructions from Washington to lodge a strong formal protest (ref b) regarding Correa's announcement that Mark Sullivan had been the CIA station chief. She said that the announcement violated worldwide diplomatic practice and broke our confidence in our ability to cooperate bilaterally. She said Ecuador would have to work to restore confidence. Falconi said he would give our message to Correa that afternoon.

#### IDB Projects

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¶5. (SBU) Falconi then raised several areas of cooperation for the U.S. to consider. The first was the international economic crisis, which Falconi said had hit Ecuador through three channels: declining international financial liquidity for Ecuador, falling exports which were pushing up unemployment, and reduced remittances. He asserted that this was creating liquidity problems for Ecuador (i.e., cash flow

management) but that Ecuador remained solvent. He said that the GOE was looking for IDB financing, and that two of the loans (\$100 million competitiveness program and \$500 million liquidity fund) would require an IMF assessment, with which Correa was willing to cooperate. He added that there were investment projects which did not require an IMF assessment (\$40 million Petroecuador project, \$80 million road project, and \$70 million hydroelectric project). He said that Ecuador hoped that these projects have the approval of the G-7 nations, given the important role those countries play in the IDB. The Ambassador made no comment.

#### Counternarcotics Cooperation

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¶6. (C) Falconi then said that Ecuador intended to continue cooperating with the United States on combating narcotics trafficking. He said that there was no doubt that there will be cooperation, and that the only question was the exact form of the cooperation. He said that it was essential to have a clear counternarcotics policy working through appropriate channels. He continued that there would be a ministerial meeting that afternoon to consider how to structure the cooperation and that he hoped to have more details on the GOE's proposal soon.

¶7. (C) The Ambassador replied that so many things had happened in recent weeks that perhaps the relationship needed a period without things happening. She continued that before Sullivan was expelled, her demarche instructions called for both sides to step back and reflect on the direction we want for our bilateral relations.

#### Law Enforcement Units

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¶8. (S/NF) The Ambassador said that the United States valued all that it has accomplished with the current and prior Ecuadorian administrations in combating narcotics trafficking. She said that the nature of the law enforcement units that the USG has supported allowed them to work as part of a worldwide network. She said she was pleased that the GOE wanted to work things out, but that the GOE needed to understand that there would be conditions for continued USG support, since there are certain standards that are applied worldwide. She asked where things stood with Minister of Government Jalkh providing a proposal on how the U.S. could continue to work with the special law enforcement units. U/S Orbe said that Minister Jalkh would soon present his proposal.

¶9. (S/NF) Falconi said that Correa would evaluate any such proposal, which would require transparency. However, they needed to know from the U.S. what our requirements were and they would look at them. (Comment: In this part of the conversation Falconi's language was quite different from language used on February 8 when "sovereignty" was a major theme. Falconi now seemed open to our concerns. End comment.) Mentioning polygraphs, Falconi turned to Orbe, who said that Coordinating Minister for Security Carvajal had suggested, for example, that the U.S. could train Ecuadorian or third country specialists to conduct the polygraphs. Falconi stepped in to say that he was not a specialist on such matters, and that experts from both countries should get together, and no doubt they would be able to reach an agreement. The Ambassador commented that that she knew the Drug Enforcement Administration had been discussing with its counterparts ways in which polygraphing could be carried out to the satisfaction of both sides. She cautioned, however, that depending on the agencies involved with vetted units that standards might vary and the GOE would have to accept that.

¶10. (C) The Ambassador repeated that there would be conditions on U.S. assistance. Falconi seemed willing to accept conditions as long as the GOE knew what they were.

The Ambassador also made clear that some of our conditions could be in written agreements, but not necessarily all of them. Falconi said nothing. The Ambassador noted that in November 2008 the Drug Enforcement Administration office in Quito had proposed to General Jaime Hurtado, head of the National Police, a written agreement on U.S. support for its vetted units and that Hurtado had not moved forward that agreement. The Ambassador suggested that we may want initially to focus on that agreement, but cautioned that each agency that supports law enforcement units will have its own specific requirements. The Ambassador asked who would coordinate this effort for the GOE, and Falconi said that Carvajal would be the appropriate interlocutor. The Ambassador said she would consult with the agencies involved and look for ways for the representatives of the agencies to meet with designated GOE officials to discuss ways forwards. She again cautioned that each agency might have different standards for collaboration. Falconi appeared to understand.

#### Inform the Foreign Ministry

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¶11. (C) In closing, Falconi said that he would like to prevent a reoccurrence of what transpired when the USG withdrew support from the police unit that handles contraband and human trafficking and the letter which provoked Correa's ire. He asked that the Embassy transmit important

developments through him.

Comment

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¶12. (C) Falconi's message was clear: Ecuador wants to get beyond the problems raised by Correa's outbursts about the USG role in two vetted law enforcement units. At one point Falconi commented that he himself had written the national development plan's social program and in it was a firm commitment to fighting narcotics trafficking for the good of the country. They wanted to get back on track. The Ambassador was firm that the GOE's behavior had caused serious diplomatic problems and that these will require time and effort to overcome but she was willing to work with Falconi on a way forward.

¶13. (C) Correa's outbursts and the subsequent expulsions were driven by various factors: his hypersensitivity to perceived slights to Ecuador's sovereignty, electoral concerns, and a desire to distract attention from the unfolding "narco-politics" scandal (Ref f). Another contributing factor was that he did not fully understand what was happening with the units, due to poor internal GOE communications and what we believe were deliberate efforts to provide him partial information calculated to rile him. Falconi's push to find ways the United States and Ecuador can continue cooperating on counternarcotics efforts may provide an avenue to test the GOE's commitment and explore whether they truly understand the issues involved even now. DEA's draft written agreement, which contains clear provisions for vetting, should be a good starting point to see whether the GOE is serious.

HODGES

=====CABLE ENDS=====